

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-4, 7-11, 13-17 and 20-23 were rejected, claims 5, 6, 18 and 19 were objected to, and claims 12 and 24 were allowed. By the present Response, claims 1, 6, 13 and 19 have been amended and claims 5 and 18 have been cancelled. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1-4, 6-17, 19-24 will remain pending in the present patent application. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the arguments summarized below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, claims 1-4, 8-10, 13-17, 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious by Horiuchi, U.S. Patent No. 5,991,356, in view of Pohlman, U.S. Patent No. 6,512,807. Claims 7, 11, 20 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Horiuchi in view of Pohlman and further in view of Tuy, U.S. Patent No. 5,243,664. Applicants respectfully assert that the present invention, as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 13 is patentable over Horiuchi, Pohlman and Tuy.

Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to include the recitations of claims 5 and 18, respectively. Claims 5 and 18 were considered allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1 and 13 are therefore in condition for allowance. Claims 5 and 18 are cancelled by the present response. The dependencies of claims 6 and 19 have been corrected by the present response. As dependent claims 2-4, 6-11, 14-17, and 19-23 depend directly or indirectly from allowable amended claims 1 and 13, respectively, these claims are therefore in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 12/13/2005

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